Menstruation

N022

Dec. 2

N018

P. R. Triplett

To N04 Sanson

Passed March 8th. 1827

Nathaniel Chapman M. D.
Professor of the Institutes and Practice of Physic
& Clinical Practice in the University of
Pennsylvania.

And to

William E Horner M. D.
Adjunct Professor of Anatomy in the University
of Pennsylvania

This essay is respectfully inscribed
by the writer—

Dear Sirs,

In submitting this paper to examination, I feel assured that its defects will be attributed to inexperience, and ignorance of that etiquette so essential to an author—

P. R. Triplett.

Tho
pens
thoug
tices;
But
plod
to th
ties o
ledge
et Pa
ht re
and
war
to be
lible
ical
ust
inv
reme
dies

The Theory of Menstruation

Though theory, in many instances may be dispensed of, in the treatment of many diseases and thought not essential to an efficient & successful practice; the archives of medicine abundantly testify- But this has been the offspring of Empyricism & plodding experience- There is no one so inexorable to the persuasion of truth, or opposed to the dictates of rationality, so violently, as not to acknowledge that sound theoretical principles, and correct Pathological views, are the surest beacons to light us through the Dedalian labyrinth of diseas- and even aided by those, when we "take a backward gaze on memory's plain" we shall too often have to bewail the non-efficiency of the most infallible of guides- Theory being based upon physiological facts, practical deductions therefrom must be of salutary tendency; or at least, not involving any egregious misapplication of remedies, in the treatment of diseases- The maladies of females, have been treated more Empyrically;

Perhap
Mosol
ured
ing th
subje
alike
that
same
tion e
on the
the c
pothes
its ca
tion a
impre
attrib
moon
of lun
fraug
man

Perhaps; than any other diseases in the catalogue of Nosology - histories of their cure even now are tinctured with its deciderating touch; almost inducing the unreflecting; to suppose that they are not subject to the same laws of the animal economy; alike in health and disease that men are; and that their ailments are not ameanable to the same pathology; variously modified - Menstruation ever since the dawn of the first knowledge on the subject has; attracted ~~a~~like the attention of the wise, and the otherwise; and diversified Hypotheses have at different times been fabricated of its cause and phenomena - In the days of superstition and ceremonial Idolatry, when things incomprehensible and apparently mysterious, were attributed to supernatural agency, and the sun moon and stars worshiped as Deities. The doctrine of lunar influence was established, and though fraught with glaring absurdities obtained for many years; and was adhered to by its advocates

with
ucter
ery a
opin
place
attack
its fa
erecte
the m
easil
up for
ties ex
which
even
the de
parties
for il
ing is
and
ion c

with a pertinacity, that, not unfrequently characterizes the zealous and misjudging Bigot in every age -- This hypothesis like most of the vague opinions of olden times, has no longer a resting place in the annals of authentic history. It was attacked by the genius of Galen who soon exposed its fallacies, and raized it to its foundation; and erected on its ruins the Doctrine of general plethora tho more specious in its argument, and not so easily refuted, as the preceding one; yet it is not less foreign of the true cause - There are other Hypothesis extant, as Fermentation Venereal Incalescence &c which are too preposterous and weak, to merit even the slightest comment - Topical Congestion the doctrine of the celebrated Cullen has yet its partisans; and no doubt will continue to have; for it is plausible and ingenious; tho it is wanting in perspicuity and devoid of consistency; and is now deservedly exploded; and in conjunction with all the preceding; is consigned to the

Tomb
ily g
popu
is th
Ghele

cedeo
there
roarn
point
it ac
suffic
not, p
myst
accor
hum
perm
limit
wit o
ony to
textur

Tomb of the Capulets (as a late writer has happily quoted) never to be disintered. The present popular and received doctrine of the schools, is that of Secretion; with whom this originated I believe is not settled, the credit has been conceded generally to John Hunter, tho it is stated there are others whose pretentions are equally warrantable, as Haller, Bordau, and Saunders, this point I shall render to others for Settlement as it accords not with the province of this paper. Suffice it to say; we believe it to be a secretion, not, pure blood elicited from its citadel by some mysterious power resident in the moon: nor to account for it rationally are we driven to the humiliating and egregious resource of chemical fermentation or laciveous propensity: nor are we limited in support of this doctrine to the ipse dixit of any one man, for we have a fabric of testimony to its maintainance of no flimsy or hetrogenious texture, while we have the conspicuous names so

Recen
ostre
tenin
dical
Those
attest
positi
in to
to its
the a
must
of Se
ters Ph
its ar
and
the
of the
ngibl
in op
the

Recently enumerated, as its base we have the superstructure of men not less eminent, who are hastening on with rapid strides, to the pinacle of medical glory, amongst whom I am proud mention those of my own country - Were we wanting in the attestations of those high authorities in support of the position, a candid and impartial examination in to the facts of the case would be sufficient to its substantiation - Any one conversant with the anatomical structure and Physiology of the uterus must readily perceive its adaptation, to the province of secretion, we find recorded in the immortal Haller's Physiology strong intimations of this fact - he says "its arteries are numerous and lax its veins small and rigid" - Independently of this organization of the uterus its being subject to the laws and diseases of the glandular system, is evidence almost irrefragible of its identity of function - Its being urged in opposition to the Parenchymatous structure of the uterus, its simple conformation, proves nothing;

For t
uterc
quan
ple t
if se
other
it is
mon
46 gt
to fur
bthe
ions
male
retur
ctory
edicl
apte
open
the m
med

For the Stomach is not more complex than the uterus, and it secretes the liquor Gastricus in large quantities; and there are many surfaces of very simple texture in the system, that performe the office of secretion, tho the matter elaborated; by tissue and other circumstances is variously modified. The uterus it is well known is liable to all the maladies common to the glandular apparatus, as schirrus, cancer, &c. It is also subject to anomalies and vitiated in its functions. which is the case with all glands when they first commence their secretory action. as is evinced in the seminal organs of the male &c. as respects the final cause & periodical returns of the catamenia there is nothing satisfactory. all that we can say is, that it is governed by the edict of Nature's God, and gives the uterus an aptitude for conception, or in other words it keeps open the uterine ducts. So when the female conceives, that the membranes can be secreted, and through their medium the circulation kept up between the

mol
whic
ever
gener
was
as the
in p
comm
indic
ant
the
cing
in ex
depte
tems
ioner
ne co
apai
moil
are th

mother and Fœtus, in some mode or other which is essential to its development and increment in utero — The menses being a fluid sui generis, not pure blood or uterine Hæmorrhage as was formerly supposed, but a genuine secretion, as the most able investigations have resulted in proveing; having neither colour or coagulability common to the blood drawn from the arm of the individual; and chemically analyzed offers different results — If it were red blood poured out fr the uterine arteries would not the mere inducing of plethora in suppresion restore them, and in excessive flow, would not the intervention of depletion, arrest the profusion — That these systems of treatment do not oblain, every practitioner must be fully aware — then it is by a more complicated plan of treatment we have to assail its derangements, and we often find the most skillful baffled in the attempt; such are the difficulties to be encountered —

In b
stru
syste
or, co
oma
secon
men
pain
disea
mea
or wo
that
ticip
For w
circis
sym
men
ence
ould
That

Amenorrhœa

In treating of the diseased state of the menstrual action - I shall follow for the sake of system the nosological arrangement of auth ors, which comprehends several varieties - firstly, emansio mensium, or retention of the menses, secondly, suppressio mensium, or suppressed menses, thirdly, that of amenorrhœa difficilis or painful menstruation - By the first of these diseases we would wish to be understood, as meaning a tardy appearance of the catamenia, or where they shall not have taken place at that period of female life which is usually anticipated; but this passage, is of relative signification - For while we see some women pass this supposed crisis, (which is altogether arbitrary) without any symptoms of menstruation and without detriment to their health, we see others who commence long before the expected time - Then, we should lay it down as a law never to be infracted, That unless the non-appearance of the catamenia

shou
our a
liene
offici
For th
plan
ch is
ost s
ema
for it
of the
as m
debil
ction
Dyspe
of foo
loins,
sym
exige
apt

should induce constitutional disturbance, to urge our attention, we should never interfere - as we believe there has been immolated at the alter of officiousness, many fair and interesting victims, For the want, merely of a knowledge of that plan of treatment, denominated Negative, which is often the most judicious as well as the most successful - Consulted in a case of supposed emansio Mensium, we should never prescribe for it, as actual disease, unless, attended by some of the subsequent characteristics of the disease, as mentioned by authors, such as, "Lassitude and debility, aversion to exercise, pale, sallow complection, edema of the feet and legs - constipation - Dyspeptic symptoms, as acidity, flatulence, loathing of food; craving of lime, chalk, pain of the head, loins, or back; tumid abdomen, with Hysteric symptoms, as palpitation, dyspnoea &c. This is an exigent state of thing and if not removed, is apt to eventuate in Hydropic or Pulmonic affections,

Lom
ciente
the
For
pear
it o
heat
tance
ntric
even
tract
at a
figec
men
menc
more
phen
14 or 1
are m
whic

Some of the preceding symptoms, are the best criteria, to conduct us to a conclusion, whether the flow should be elicited by our aid, or not— For under those circumstances of disease, their appearance is essential to the health and comfort of the female— The menstrual period in the healthy is very much influenced by circumstances, as climate Idiosyncrasy &c; In tropical countries, as africa &c: it commences at an early period; even nine or ten years, being copious, and of protracted duration, the cessation takes place also at a much earlier period of life— While in the frigid and bleak country of Lapland, the women begin later in life, and cease later; not commencing till twenty or twenty five— But in the more temperate clime of Europe or America, this phenomenon is generally anticipated about the 14 or 15 Year, and ends about the 45 Year. Tho there are many deviations from this supposed time. which may be attributed to a slow or a celerated

advo
ical
which
ment
fixed
recog
are de
velop
ovario
as Phl
supp
to est
dial
they
to the
supp
obstru
nce t
on of
sipal

advance to puberty - which is influenced by phys
ical causes, not easily traced out, or accounted for -
which impede, or promote the development of diffe
rent organs; consequently every aberration from this
fixed crisis in the life of the female, is not to be
recognized as disease - The causes of this disease
are diversified, the most common are imperfect de
velopment of the uterus, and its appendages, as the
ovaria: also different constitutional derangements,
as Phthisis; Splenitis, Hepatitis, &c. Where retained or
suppress menses are owing to ovarian disorganization,
to establish their flow is not within our reme-
dial competency, as it is satisfactorily proven, that
they exert an influence on the uterus, essential
to the production of this fluid - It is rational to
suppose that the cause that would suppress, &c
obstruct the menses, once established, would ind
uce their retention, or prevent or pervert that acte
on of the uterus, essential to their elaboration - Con
stipation, or derangement of the prima via, is

G
w
ion
w
un
tim
bic
thi
na
of th
bit
shou
age
an
shou
due
men
ensi
and
upo

Generally, productive of this mischief, if present when the uterus is about to take on the menstrual action. That this is the fact in the majority of retentions, we feel safe in asserting; and we see practitioners uniformly acting under this supposition, and treating the disease by the purgative plan, (nothing forbidding) generally, with the happiest results. But this like all other diseases should not be treated by name, but with due regard to the circumstances of the case, the system may be in a plethoric or debilitated condition, and the prevailing diathesis, should direct us in the choice of our remedial agents, whether, depletory, stimulant, or tonic, or an alternation, or blending of them all. Chlorosis should be treated upon general principles, with due regard to incidental symptoms. The derangement of this function, denominated, suppressio menstruum has by authors been divided into checked, and obstructed, the first is, where the cause acts upon the system during the flow, and arrests them,

G
a
th
se
th
un
in
ver
if
wit
com
Am
gna
offe
stre
bus,
cid
case
prim
idio

Passions of the mind, cold, or any thing making a decided impression on the system, may induce this state of things. Obstruction is effected by causes supervening the menstrual period, disorganizing the uterine or general System. This I conceive to be an unessential division, as there is almost an identity in the treatment, to be pursued. true the first requires less energy generally, to produce a restoration, but if this cannot be effected, & the female passes a period without her courses, the two diseases necessarily become identified; and demand the same practice. Amenorrhoea is often symptomatic of disease, or pregnancy, it is not unfrequently occasioned by chronic affections of the Liver, Lungs, Spleen, &c, or functional or structural derangement of the uterus; of Fluor albus, schirrus, cancer, or or organized substances, as decidua Membrane. When Symptomatic of other diseases, our remedies should be first directed to the primary affection, and if we succeed in curing the idiopathic disease, the menses generally flow

spontaniously, if a morbid secretion, be the offending cause, we should attempt its correction by the appropriate remedies - If schirrus or Cancer Polypi &c. the most that we can do, is, to paliate the sufferings of our patient, and pray to apuage that condition we cannot alleviate - In cases of arrested catamenia, we generally have at first, pain in the head & loins - much gastric disorder, with fœtid breath, the face, suffused, with dark half circles under the eyes, cold feet, with dry surface - constipation of the bowels, with considerable commotion in the circulation, and if this state be not retieved, we generally have succeeding it, a more formidable enemy: Yes, we soon are summoned, to witnes the ravages of disease upon that form once perhaps the admiration of thousands, now, nought but beauties spectre - where long rested the roseate hue of health and lillied whiteness now presides, the harbingers of death, pallid touch - and peradventure, the only and the last lingering hope, of fond and idolizing parents, about to

pa
be
an
tho
wa
rest
mo
hav
de i
prom
dence
at co
such
evinc
ite p
aouen
there
and
some
ore th

pas the threshold, of irreversable fate—what must be their anxiety, their solicitude, for her condition and further ask how pleasurable must be the thought, how consoling the reflection, of him, who was instrumental in rescuing an object, so interesting, so, beloved from the relentless grasp of mortality — When symptoms urgent as those we have enumerated exist, no hesitation should be made in resorting to the Lancet, as affording the most prompt & efficient means of relief—according to the evidence of practitioners on this subject, it is worthy of great confidence, and we pleasure in coenciding with such authority, for we have seen it more than once, evincing the influence of a charm—relieveng exquisite pain of the loins & head, involving a state approaching that of Phrenitis—relaxing the surface where there wase much preternatural heat and dryness— and in a word; bettering the condition of the patient so much, as to conduce to repose, and ultimately restore the suppres catamenia—Unfortunately for the

fair
boas
in a
purg
we
recur
Emm
simp
istra
and
their
requi
and t
know
an on
nd to
relieve
of disc
nd, on
oving

fair sufferers, under this affliction - we can seldom boast of such easy conquests - Often we have to call in all the auxillary means of depletion as vomiting, purgeing, sweating, and blistering; in all sthenic cases, we should adopt this plan, wholy or in part, as circumstances may require; before recourse is had to Emmenagogues - the want of attention to this one simple, tho important principle, in their administration, has been the source of multiplied error, and the spring of all contliction, in opinions of, their virtue - this class of remedies like many others requires a unison in action betwen their Specific action and the mobility of the sanguiferous system; we all know that high action, even retards the operation of an emetic, or purge, and when they do operate, often tend to aggravate the symptoms, they were designed to relieve - This indiscriminate use of remedies, this treating of diseases, by rule and recipe, is the only solitary ground, on which we can extenuate or reconcile the opposing statements, of so many respectable physicians -

Pom
hapo
cole
ing-
ual b
mov
emel
antic
practi
abou
partic
often
other
were
bing
lover
patien
semic
of tim
alain

Vomiting in this disease we believe to be a new, and perhaps may be supposed a novel remedy, at least, when extended as far, as, we have been in the habit of doing - after having reduced the system, if not already below or at least to the standard of healthy movement in the circulation, we administer an emetic of Tartar Emet; every other morning, until the anticipated effect is obtained, (nothing forbidding this practice) which in most every instance, was obtained about the third or fourth repetition - This practice is particularly appropriate in old chronic cases - we have often succeeded with this plan of treatment, where every other had failed in the hands of our friends - we were led to this practice, by a casual circumstance - having administered emetics to several patient to answer other indications, we were informed by our patients, that their courses had appeaid, almost simultaneous with the operation, the entirely out of time, being previously regular, this excited some claim, and we were consequently consulted - This

inc
hac
the
to th
case
this
other
in th
ual
the c
sun
syste
with
athe
are
neve
in th
est
it d
ithou

induced us to try the remedy, with some patients we had labouring under chronic suppresion, and with the happiest results — and we make it a point to recur to this remedy when all others have aborted, (in suitable cases) we are aware that emetics have been given in this disease, with a view to prepare the system for other articles. This is not what we wish to inculcate in this paper, ordinary cases may be cured by the usual remedies, but, we know there are cases that resist the common mode of treatment, and prove obstinate & unrelenting. To this stale of disease we believe this system particularly adapted — Cathartics are given with good effect we have often witnesed as the drastic articles as Calomel Gamboge aloes scammony &c These are applicable to every stage of the disease and should never be over-looked in its treatment, attention to the skin in this, and all other diseases, is a matter of the high est importance, tho very much neglected we here lay it down as an axiom, that health cannot exist without a free circulation in the capillaries of the

Surg
of th
and
can
une
dua
Bli
in 2
exte
to th
be th
actu
gogue
requi
their
to the
the p
our e
ed b
aides,

Surface. There is no affection perhaps where the function of the surface is more implicated, than in aminorhœa, and must always be restored before that equilibrium can exist in the circulation, so essential to health, the unequal distribution of which, invariably produces derangement, more or less of the whole machine. Blisters are sometimes used with decided efficacy in Suppressio menseum; sometimes applied to the extremities, on the principle of revulsion, at others to the sacrum, as a local stimulant, this appears to be the better practice, of either we know nothing from actual experience. In the administration of Emmenagogues, so much discrimination and circumspection are required; that we are almost compeled to retire from their consideration, doubting our capacity to do justice to the subject, as well as awed by the responsibility of the province. We shall mention those articles which our experience has tested; and also those most commended by authors: Those which we have tried, are Tinct: Cantharides in combination with other articles & Polygala Senega,

Beu
tedu
ding
Lytta
zij, T
four
is de
or foo
we
some
tem
de ne
delec
to ca
disco
inat
Polyg
ue f
mes
oun

Being the most efficacious, with which we are acquainted. The subsequent formula, we have found exceedingly prompt & energetic in its effect. Take of Tinctura Lytta ℥ij, Balsam Copaiva ℥ij, Spt. Cornu Cervi ℥ij, Comp: Lavend: ℥ij, Tinct: Theb: ℥i, of this a tea Spoonful taken three or four times in the course of the day, and where there is debility give 30, 40 or 50 gtt. of Tinct Mus: Ferri, three or four times a day with some pleasant bitter, this we have found to be a sterling prescription, under some restrictions, the greatest is always have the system at or below its healthy tone, if this precaution be neglected, it is worse than nugatory, often proving detrimental. There is no remedy perhaps better fitted to cases complicated with Fluor albus, or even this disease itself, from what ever cause, it may originate, can be cured by its judicious exhibition. The Polygala Senega in decoction is a remedy, on which we place much reliance, as well, from the high terms in which Dr Chapman has represented as from our own experience. This, like Digitalis in dropsy, displays

its
uegr
cord
in c
men
as th
other
mac
Tinc
auto
the
m in
the
this
Tinc
more
the o
acqu
that
tion,

its specific power best, in atonic cases, where the pulse requires a little stimulus; this should be premised according to the exigency of the case; intermitting its use in the interval, and recurring to it again about the menstrual period. The dose is about ℥j or more or less as the circumstances may demand. There are many other which may be used as, Savin, Black Hellebore, madder, Ergot &c. of which I shall say nothing. The Tincture of Cantharides is highly recommended by late authors, particularly Dr Dewees, he gives it per se, with the happiest results, in doses of 30 gtt. after the system is duly prepared for its reception, he prefers trying the madder first, if fail then the canthardes, when this proves unavailing, he usualy resorts to the Vol. Tinct. Guaiacum. He states that the pulse requires more reduction to ablain its good effect, than where the other remedies are employed. We here inter our acquiescence with the Dr, and state as our conviction, that we believe the pulse should be reduced, in proportion to the stimulus of the remedy; suppose the pulse at 70

and
shou
cefi
case
illa
gene
afal
poph
pus
is a
take
It f
infe
to t
boo
Ca
em
Uter
s be a
dut

and the stimulating quality of the remedy so the pulse should be reduced to that number; if we wish a specific effect produced on the system. In all these diseases particular regard should be had to all the auxillary measures, as treating hysteric, & other symptoms on general principles, as the use of Opium, Camph, or Asafatida, warm local applications, anodyne injections with proper diet, exercise on horse back in good weather — jumping the rope, dancing &c; &c:; Dysmenorrhœa, this is a very common & formidable complaint; it may take place any time during the menstruating period. It frequently induces the deepest despondency, and inflicts the patient with the greatest torture. It presents to the her imagination "the blackest pictures in the book of time." Cold appears to be the most frequent cause of the disease — the secretion of a membrane takes place resembling the decidua, is sometimes expelled from the uterus with the most violent contractions, with great pain & bearing down efforts — this continues until all the extraneous substance is discharged, which comes away sometimes nearly

whoo
durc
to eff
carr
mos
cure,
be in
Lytta,
when
they
is ob
atter
calc
sepl
36-7
we
of o
cas

whole; but generally in small fibers or clots—Called to a patient during the paroxysm, we can do little more than mitigate pain, to effect this we give anodyne enemata, composed of Laudanum Camphor &c, also Camphor by the mouth, according to Dr Dewees, is the most effectual remed to assuage suffering. To effect a permanent cure, the remedies recommended in Suppression, should be interposed between the menstrual periods—Such as Tind. Lytta, Tinct: Guaiacum, &c, These will seldom fail to afford relief, when given under certain restriction, above mentioned—They should be persevered in for months or until a cure is obtained—Those remedies should be aided by a strict attention to diet & moderate exercise; and every thing calculated to alter the morbid condition of the uterine system. We may have occasion to resort to V.S, purging, &c—This matter, should be tenaciously attended to, as we have before said; it often prevents the due operation of our remedies, and not unfrequently hastens the disease, to an unhappy issue—

P. R. Tiplitt